



Town of Arlington  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of the Board of Health  
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**MEMO**

To: Arlington Places of Worship and Funeral Homes  
From: Natasha Waden, Public Health Director  
Date: December 18, 2020  
RE: Revised Safety Standards: Places of Worship

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Due to the statewide rollback to Phase III, Step I, revisions to the Places of Worship Safety Standards were made to provide instructions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19 as the number of persons attending in-person services increases through the holiday season. Please note, funeral homes are also subject to the Places of Worship safety standards. The revised safety standards were effective as of December 13, 2020.

- Places of worship shall communicate to members and workers that they **should not** attend services in-person if any of the following are true:
  - Member or worker has or is experiencing any [symptom of COVID-19](#)
  - Member or worker has been in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19
  - Member or worker has been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official
- Places of worship must monitor member entries and exits to ensure capacity does not exceed 40% of the building's maximum permitted occupancy.
  - All occupancy counts and calculations shall include attendees, staff and other workers
- Attendees who are not part of the same immediate household must be seated at least 6 feet apart
- All attendees and staff must wear face coverings or masks in accordance with the [Massachusetts Face Covering Order](#)
  - A leader or celebrant engaged in conducting the service may remove their face covering while doing so, provided that they maintain 6 ft distance from others.
- Places of worship shall not have communal gatherings pre or post service (e.g., coffee hours or other food services)

These standards apply to all service and activities including regular and holiday services, weddings, funerals, wakes, support group meetings, and other related gatherings. Revised [Safety Standards, Protocol Summary, and checklist may be found here](#).

For questions regarding this matter, please contact the Health Department at (781) 316-3170.